

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3488

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LIMDIS

C O R R E C T E D COPY: LINE 8 PARA 2 WORD GIVE SHOULD READ
FIVE

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, YELLOW PERIL

REF: MANILA 12240, 12466

1. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR CLARIFICATION OF "HEGEMONY"
IN REFTTEL, WHICH ENABLES US TO REDUCE AMBASSADOR
SULLIVAN'S YELLOW PERIL THESIS TO THE THREE FOLLOWING
RELATED POSITIONS:

A. FIRSTLY, SEA STATES WILL CONTINUE TO TURN
AWAY FROM WESTERN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MODELS, AND
WILL EMULATE THE PRC. THIS PROCESS OF EMULATION WILL
COINCIDE WITH A MODEST GROWTH IN CHINESE MILITARY
CAPABILITIES, WHICH WILL ENABLE CHINA TO ESTABLISH
ITS HEGEMNY IN SEA. AS A RESULT, SEA WILL BECOME A
CHINESE SATELLITE SYSTEM (COMPARABLE TO SOVIET SYSTEM
IN EAST EUROPE), WHOSE MEMBERS WILL CLOSELY FOLLOW
CHINA'S LEAD IN FOREIGN POLICY.

B. SECONDLY, AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN REASONS THAT
THIS CHINESE SATELLITE SYSTEM IN SEA WILL: 1) DAMAGE
AMERICAN INTERESTS, 2) DESTABILIZE ALL OF ASIA,

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3) PUT CHINA IN POSITION TO CONTROL SEA LANES WHICH

ARE VITAL TO JAPAN, THUS PUTTING TOKYO IN THRALL TO
TO PEKING, AND PERHAPS DRIVING TOKYO INTO THE ARMS OF
MOSCOW.

C. THIRDLY, AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN CONCLUDES THAT
SINCE IT IS NOT IN OUR POWER TO DO MUCH ABOUT
THE FIRST PROPOSTIION, WE SHOULD FORMULATE A POLICY WHICH
WILL PREVENT OR MINIMIZE THE DAMAGES LISTED IN
PROPOSITION TWO. HIS OWN TENTATIVE SUGGESTION IS TO
BARGAIN FOR AN ASSURANCE FROM PEKING TO FOREGO THE EXERCISE
OF HEGEMONY IN SEA (I.E. ACCEPT AND ENCOURAGE THE
INDEPENDENCE OF SEA STATES),
AS PART OF AN AGREEMENT ON THE NORMALIZATION OF
US-PRC RELATIONS AND THE FUTURE OF TAIWAN.

2. WE TAKE ISSUE WITH AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN ON EACH
OF THESE THREE PROPOSITIONS.

A. IT IS EXTREAMELY UNLIKELY THAT CHINA WILL
ESTABLISH AN HEGEMONY INS SEA THAT WILL BE CAOMPARABLE
TO THE SOVIET SATELLITE SYSTEM IN EAST EUROPE;
OR WILL RESULT IN A CHINESE BLOC, WHICH WILL FOLLOW
FOREIGN POLICY INSTRUCTIONS FROM PEKING. THEORETICALLY
THE CHINESE MODEL, AS EXPRESSED IN THE FIVE PRINCIPLES
OR COEXISTANCE IN FOREIGN POLICY. IN PRACTICE, CHINA
HAS TRADITIONALLY BASED ITS FOREIGN POOLICY ON THE
MANIPULATION OF COMPETING EXTERNAL FORCES, RATHER
THAN ON THE FORMATION OF REGIONAL BLOCS OR COOPERATIVE
ORGANIZATIONS. IN BOTH THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF
FOREIGN POLICY, COMMUNIST CHINA HAS HELD TO THE
PATTERN MOST OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE THREE KINGDOMS
PERIOD (221-263 AD). IF THE SEA STATES EMULATE THIS
MODEL, THEY WILL NOT BE AMENABLE TO INSTRUCTIONS
FROM PEKING.

B. CONSEQUENTLY, IN ORDER TO CREATE A SATELLITE
SYSTEM IN SEA, CHINA WOULD HAVE TO EXERCISE MILITARY
CONTROL OVER THE REGION, COMPARABLE TO THAT WHICH
THE SOVIETS EXERCISE N EAST EUROPE. THIS, TOO, IS
HIGHLY UNLIKELY. IT IS DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE THE
CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH CHINESE ARMIES WOULD SWEEP
OVER SEA, AS THE SOVIETS SWEEPED OVER EAST EUROPE.
MOREOVER, EVEN IF CHINA WERE TO SUBSTANTIALY
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INCREASE ITS MILITARY CAPABILITIES IN THE COMING
DECADE, ITS FORCES WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR
ENFORCEMENT ACTION OR TO MAN A BASE NETWORK IN SEA,
SO LONG AS THEY ARE TIED DOWN ON THE NORTHERN
FRONTIER.

C. WITH RESPECT TO THE SEA STATES THEMSELVES,
THE SULLIVAN THESIS TOO HEAVILY DISCOUNTS THE FORCES
OF NATIONALISM, ALTHOUGH HANOI HAS EMULATED PEKING

IN MANY RESPECTS, IT HAS NOT BECOME A VASSAL IN FOREIGN POLICY. CERTAINLY, IT IS A MISTAKE TO OVERLOOK THE INHERENT STRENGTH AND RESILIENCE OF NATIONALISM IN THAILAND. IT APPEARS TO US THAT AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN IS ARGUING THAT THE FAILURE OF OUR POLICY OF NATION-BUILDING IN SEA HAS ALSO MARKED THE END OF NATIONALISM IN THE REGION. CLEARLY THIS IS NOT THE CASE.

D. IN SUM, WE BELIEVE THAT CHINESE PREDOMINANCE IN SEA IF IT MATERIALIZES AT ALL, WOULD BE A LOOSE, HETEROGENEOUS ARRANGEMENT, RATHER THAN A SATELLITE SYSTEM; THAT THE SEA STATES WILL NOT BE AMENABLE TO CLOSE CHINESE SUPERVISION IN FOREIGN POLICY; AND THAT PEKING, PREOCCUPIED MILITARILY WITH SOVIETS, WILL NOT BE ABLE TO IMPOSE ITS WILL ON ITS NEIGHBORS TO THE SOUTH.

E. SINCE WE DO NOT ACCEPT AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN'S FIRST PROPOSITION, WE ARE LOGICALLY LED TO REJECT HIS SECOND PROPOSITION. WE DO NOT SEE HOW A LOOSE, WEAK CHINESE HEGEMONY IN SEA WILL DAMAGE US INTERESTS; DESTABILIZE THE REGION; OR PROJECT CHINESE NAVAL POWER OVER THE SEA LANES THAT ARE VITAL TO JAPAN.

F. WHILE US AND JAPANESE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN SEA MIGHT CONCEIVABLY (BUT NOT NECESSARILY) BE DAMAGED BY THE ASCENDANCE OF MAOIST GOVERNMENTS, POLITICALLY SEA WOULD BE NO MORE UNSTABLE THAN IT HAS BEEN. AND THERE IS NO BASIS IN OUR EXPERIENCE OR IN LOGIC WHICH LEADS US TO CONCLUDE THAT INSTABILITY IN SEA PRODUCES INSTABILITY IN NEA. FINALLY, CHINA'S ABILITY TO THREATEN JAPAN'S SEA LANES DEPENDS LESS ON THE USE OF PARTS IN SEA THAN ON CHINA'S POSSESSING AN OFFENSIVE, BLUE-WATER NAVY. NOT SINCE THE DAYS OF THE EUNUCH ADMIRAL
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CHENG HO IN THE MING DYNASTY HAS CHINA EXPRESSED INTEREST IN DEVELOPING A NAVAL ROLE BEYOND THE DEFENSE OF COASTAL WATERS.

3. SINCE WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT CHINESE HEGEMONY IN SEA, EVEN IF IT MATERIALIZES WILL DAMAGE US INTERESTS OR DESTABILIZE ALL OF ASIA, WE SEE NO POINT IN BARGAINING WITH CHINA OVER THE FUTURE OF TAIWAN, IN AN EFFORT TO WIN ASSURANCES THAT CHINA WILL RESPECT OUR INTERESTS IN THAT REGION. WE SEE NO REASON TO SQUANDER ANY LEVERAGE WE CAN GAIN FROM THE TAIWAN ISSUE IN RETURN FOR DUBIOUS AND UNNECESSARY PLEDGES FROM PEKING.

4. WE BELIEVE THAT WHETHER OR NOT THE SEA STATES EMULATE CHINESE MODEL, THEY WILL CONTINUE TO BE RELATIVELY

POOR, WEAK AND NATIONALIST; AND THAT THEY WILL
CONTINUE TO SEEK TECHNOLOGY, INVESTMENT AND TRADE
WITH THE US, JAPAN AND WESTERN EUROPE, WHICH THE
SOVIETS AND THE CHINESE ARE SIMPLY UNABLE TO PROVIDE.
WE SEE NO MILITARY THREAT TO THE US EMANATING FROM
SEA. WE RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT THE LIMITED US
DIPLOMATIC AND COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN THE REGION BE
MAINTAINED BY A POLICY OF COOPERATING WITH JAPAN AND
WITH THE WESTERN EUROPEANS IN RESPONDING CONSTRUCTIVELY
TO THE NATIONALISM AND TO THE ECONOMIC NEEDS OF THE
SEA STATES.
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